

Serial No. 10/603,625
Amendment filed July 23, 2007
Response to Final Office Action mailed February 21, 2007

Docket No. KAS-183

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Pending Claims

Claims 1-5 are pending in this application. Claims 1, and 3-5 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

Interview Summary

Applicants extend their appreciation to the Examiner for granting an Office interview in the above-identified application. In the interview, it was discussed that applicants would amend the claims to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, first and second paragraphs. Further, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) of the claims as being anticipated by Ohishi et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,019,945 was discussed in the interview. In the interview, it was brought to the Examiner's attention that the automatic analyzer of the present invention has a control device that functions to separate an analysis unit from an information network and to shut off the power supply of the analysis unit. The referenced portion of Ohishi, mainly column 9, line 43 to column 10, line 23 does not disclose this aspect of the invention as set forth in claim 1. Applicants' full response to the rejections in the Final Office Action are set forth as follows.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112

Claims 3-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claims 3-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and

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distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention.

Claim 3 has been amended to delete the "specifying means" in order to render moot the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, without admitting to the propriety of the rejection.

Claim 3 has also been amended to change the recitation of the "display means" to a -- mode setting screen -- in order to clarify that which applicants regard as the invention. Accordingly, the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-5 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Ohishi et al, U.S. Patent No. 6,019,945. Applicants request reconsideration of the rejection for the following reasons.

The present invention is directed to an automatic analyzer having a plurality of analysis units 103 and a conveying unit 102. An operation section 106, which is a central control device, performs the operation with respect to each of the analysis units.

When one analysis unit suffers any failure during an analysis operation, its' operation enters a standby state while the operation of the entire analyzer system continues. An operator can set the analysis unit to a power-off enable mode which separates the analysis unit from the information network of the entire analyzer system until the mode is switched back to the active mode. See page 7, lines 15-19 of the Specification. Further, in the power-off enable mode, it is possible to shut off the power supply only to the analysis unit by a power-off switch, while maintaining power supply to the entire analyzer system. See page 7, lines 16-21, of the

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Specification. Further, once the analysis unit is again powered on, system software is loaded into the analyzer unit and it can again return to an operational state. See page 8, lines 5-7 of the Specification.

In Ohishi, on the other hand, the sample analysis system has plural analysis units each having a control computer 6A – 6G for executing the required processing and control therefor. The output signals from the analysis units are executed by an analysis unit's computers 6A – 6G and the host computer 40 that is connected thereto executes operational control of each analysis portion, the rack transfer system and other necessary portions of the system. See column 4, lines 32 – 42 of Ohishi.

The Examiner cites column 9, line 43 to column 10, line 12 for showing the claimed central control device that functions to separate an analysis unit from an information network of the central control device and to shut off a power supply of the analysis unit. With respect to column 10, lines 5 – 8, the sample analysis system of Ohishi is disclosed as being maintained even when an analysis unit fails. That is, Ohishi discloses that the failed analysis unit is removed integral with its associated rack transfer mechanism from the conveyor line for repair. However, there is no disclosure of a central control device as claimed by applicants and the separation of the analysis unit from the information network by the central control device to shut off the power supply of the analysis unit. Accordingly, the reference does not anticipate the invention as claimed and therefore withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

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Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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